



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (12.06 pm): Today is World Environment Day. On Sunday the Premier announced ClimateSmart 2050, a \$414 million climate change strategy which sets out the government's plan to lower greenhouse gas emissions. Key aspects of the fund include \$300 million for the Queensland Climate Change Fund to develop new technologies, \$50 million for a Renewable Energy Fund to promote research and development, ClimateSmart home rebates of around \$7.25 million to help people living in remote areas and \$10 million to identify future geosequestration sites to allow the safe storage of carbon dioxide emissions over the long term.

Queensland is clearly leading the way on climate change policy. On Sunday the Prime Minister started playing catch-up politics on climate change, stating that emission trading targets would not be set until next year. Funny that—after the next election! He started his scare campaign stating that federal Labor had committed to a 20 per cent reduction by 2020, which is simply not true. In an attempt to scare the public, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the Prime Minister said—

To meet that target every coal and gas fired power station would have to be replaced by a nuclear plant and every car, truck and motorbike would have to be removed from the roads, driving the economy into recession.

A government member: Absolute rubbish!

Ms PALASZCZUK: I take that interjection. John Howard has had 11 years to come up with a policy.

Ms Jones: He's been there too long.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right. He has been there too long. John Howard has come up with half a policy because it is an election year.

A few months ago I attended the National Climate Law Conference at the Australian National University. The purpose of the conference was to look at what laws Australia will need to implement to combat climate change over the next 10 to 30 years to minimise the impact of global warming. Climate change affects everyone. It will affect every part of the world. If we continue to emit carbon dioxide into the atmosphere the earth's temperature could increase up to two degrees Celsius.

In a news poll on 16 to 18 February 2007, 70 per cent of people said that they thought that climate change would have an effect on Australia and was indeed a major problem. In other parts of the world people are finding a national solution. In the UK the first draft bill has been developed. The aim of the UK bill is to reduce CO₂ emissions by 60 per cent by 2050. One week later Canada put forward a similar proposal.

What is the Howard government doing? Very little! As the Premier stated in question time today, the Howard government should be leading the way by setting a national response to climate change but it has simply failed. The Stern report argues that we must immediately reduce our emissions or suffer the economic consequences. The scientists at the conference I attended reported that global warming would

have an impact on our species in the Wet Tropics—with a two degree Celsius increase, we would see species extinguished and we would see an increase in coral bleaching to our very own Great Barrier Reef.

Tim Flannery in his book *We are the Weathermakers* states—

The Great Barrier Reef is the most vulnerable reef in the world to climate change.

In all, 42 per cent of it was bleached in 1998, with 18 per cent suffering permanent damage. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2007 states—

Increases in sea surface temperature of about 1 to 3°C are projected to result in more frequent coral bleaching events.

The impact on our reef and the Wet Tropics is real and something must be done. That is why the Queensland government is leading the way on climate change. As the Premier stated on Sunday, Queensland has already committed to playing its part in achieving a national target of 60 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. He stated further—

To achieve this target we are committed to ensuring the security of a low cost electricity supply for all Queenslanders, support for our robust economic growth and sustaining our coal industry.

Clean coal technology is therefore important. The booming economies of China and India over the coming decades will rely heavily on coal to drive their economies and industry. Queensland can have a large part to play if we can develop new technologies now and export that expertise to these two countries. As part of ClimateSmart 2050, the Queensland government will set up a \$10 million fund to aid industry to look at our capacity for the storage of CO₂ emissions. That development is vital to the development of clean coal technology.

The government has the policy right. It is achievable and everyone can play their part. The community is vital in making this strategy work as well. ClimateSmart 2050 also identifies that the small things that we can do can make a world of difference. To respond to the climate change challenge, Queenslanders will be encouraged to match their water-saving efforts with energy savings to reduce the energy intensity of their lifestyles and achieve greenhouse gas savings.